

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 EUR-25 PM-07 NSC-10 SS-15 RSC-01 DPW-01

L-03 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-03 PRS-01

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FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

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INFO USDEL JEC PARIS IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 8919

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, VS

SUBJECT: MR I CEASEFIRE AND POLITICAL WEEKLY OVERVIEW FOR
PERIOD MAY 13 - MAY 19, 1973

THE FOLLOWING SENT SAIGON FROM AMCONSUL DANANG 20 MAY 73
REPEATED FOR YOUR ACTION AND INFO. QUOTE:

C O N F I D E N T I A L DANANG 560

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, VS

SUBJ: MR I CEASEFIRE AND POLITICAL WEEKLY OVERVIEW FOR
PERIOD MAY 13 - MAY 19, 1973

SUMMARY: MILITARY ACTIVITY INCREASED SLIGHTLY DURING THE WEEK
WITH THE FOCUS REMAINING ON THE AREA WEST AND SOUTHWEST OF
HUE. IMPROVED COMMUNIST ANTI- AIRCRAFT CAPABILITIES ARE CAUSING
INCREASED CONCERN AT I CORPS HEADQUARTERS. FIRST INDICATIONS
APPEARED IN QUANG NGAI OF A POSSIBLE POST- CEASE FIRE RE-
ORGANIZATION OF GVN TERRITORIAL FORCES. REGION II ICCS GAINED
A NEW POLDEL CHIEF WHO MAY INVIGORATE REGIONAL ICCS ACTIVITIES.
INITIAL REPORTS OF VILLAGE COUNCIL ELECTIONS IN QUANG NAM
SHOW DEMOCRACY PARTY DOMINANCE. BUDDHA' S BIRTHDAY WAS
CELEBRATED GENERALLY IN AN EBULLIENT MANNER WITH SOME WARY
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GOVERNMENT COOPERATION. END SUMMARY.

1. MILITARY SITUATION:

THE LEVEL OF ACTIVITY IN MR I INCREASED SLIGHTLY DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD. THE AVERAGE OF REPORTED COMMUNIST VIOLATIONS ROSE FROM 14 TO 16 A DAY. THE SLIGHT STATISTICAL UPTURN DOES NOT REFLECT THE MORE MARKED INCREASE IN INTENSITY TOWARD THE END OF THE PERIOD, WHICH WAS FOCUSED AGAIN ON THE AREAS WEST AND SOUTHWEST OF HUE. THE 1 ST BATTALION, 51 ST REGIMENT WEST OF CO BI AND THE 1 ST BATTALION, 1 ST REGIMENT AND 2 D BATTALION, 51 ST REGIMENT SOUTHEAST AND SOUTHWEST OF KIM QUY TOOK HEAVY MORTAR BOMBARDMENTS ON MAY 17 AND 18. CASUALTIES FOR THE PERIOD ROSE WITH A DAILY AVERAGE OF 8 FRIENDLY KIA, DOUBLE LAST WEEK'S. FRIENDLY ARTILLERY CONTINUED TO FIRE LESS THAN 2,000 ROUNDS PER DAY.

2. COMMUNIST MILITARY ACTIVITIES:

I CORPS HEADQUARTERS IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY CONCERNED OVER IMPROVED COMMUNIST ANTI- AIRCRAFT CAPABILITIES IN WESTERN MR I, DURING THE WEEK I CORPS REQUESTED JGS APPROVED HIGH LEVEL PHOTO RECONNAISSANCE OF THE WESTERN REGION II TO IDENTIFY TRIPLE A SITES. NVAF FLIGHTS IN THE REGION HAVE BEEN RESTRICTED BECAUSE OF CONCERN FOR THE ENEMY ANTI- AIRCRAFT CAPABILITY.

3. GVN MILITARY ACTIVITIES:

DURING THE WEEK THE FIRST REPORTS OF A POSSIBLE REORGANIZATION OF TERRITORIAL FORCES WAS RECEIVED FROM QUANG NGAI. THE PROVINCE CHIEF WAS INSTRUCTED TO DEACTIVATE 13 PF PLATOONS AND TO PROVIDE 500 RF TROOPS FOR TRANSFER TO ARVN. ALTHOUGH WE HAVE NOT RECEIVED SIMILAR REPORTS FROM OTHER PROVINCES, THIS MAY BE THE FIRST INDICATION OF A POST- CEASE FIRE DEMOBILIZATION AND REDUCTION IN FORCE OF TERRITORIAL FORCES.

4. ICCS ACTIVITIES:

A. THE REGION II POLISH DELEGATION RECEIVED A NEW TEAM CHIEF DURING THE WEEK. COLONEL MARIAN WIECZERZAK, FORMERLY OF REGION VII, OFFICIALLY TOOK OVER AND, SINCE THIS WAS POLAND'S WEEK
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AS REGIONAL CHAIRMAN, HE ALSO ACTED IN THAT CAPACITY. WIECZERZAK HAS ALREADY IMPRESSED SOME OF THE CANDEL WITH HIS MORE SOPHISTICATED APPROACH TO ICCS PROCEDURES. DURING A COURTESY CALL ON THE COUNSUL, WIECZERZAK EXPRESSED SOME OPTIMISM THAT ALTHOUGH THE ICCS MUST WORK SLOWLY, IT IS ALREADY HAVING SOME IMPACT ON REDUCING HOSTILITIES. WIECZERZAK SAID HE EXPECTS THE ICCS'S INFLUENCE AND EFFECTIVENESS IN REGION II TO INCREASE.

B. ALSO DURING THE WEEK REGION II TEAMS IN TAM KY AND CHU LAI CONDUCTED THEIR FIRST INVESTIGATION WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF THE POLES AND HUNGARIANS. WHETHER THIS INITIATIVE IS THE RESULT OF WIECZERZAK'S PRESENCE ALONE OR OF INSTRUCTIONS FROM HIGHER HEADQUARTERS IS NOT CLEAR.

5. VILLAGE ELECTIONS:

RETURNS FROM THE SEVEN FIRST ROUND VILLAGE ELECTIONS WHICH TOOK PLACE IN QUANG NAM PROVINCE ON MAY 15 (PARTIALLY REPORTED IN DANANG 558) OFFER THE FOLLOWING STRAWS IN THE POLITICAL WIND. FIRST, DEMOCRACY PARTY CANDIDATES RAN CONSISTENTLY AT THE TOP OF THE LISTS, WINNING NEARLY 85 PERCENT OF THE CONTESTED SEATS. SECOND, MOST OF THE VICTORS WERE INCUMBENTS WITH ESTABLISHED LOCAL POLITICAL INFLUENCE. THIRD, THE VOTER TURNOUT IN RURAL VILLAGES WAS STRONG (OVER 90 PERCENT), IN CONTRAST TO THE TURNOUT OF 71 PERCENT IN HOI AN TOWN AND LESS THAN 50 PERCENT IN THE DANANG SUBURBS IN HOA VANG DISTRICT.

6. BUDDHA' S BIRTHDAY:

IN HUE AND DANANG, A GENUINELY EBULLIENT HOLIDAY ATMOSPHERE MARKED THIS YEAR' S CELEBRATION OF BUDDHA' S BIRTHDAY, IN SHARP CONTRAST TO THE SOBER HOLIDAY LAST YEAR IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE FALL OF QUANG TRI. IN PART THIS IS A REFLECTION OF A HOPEFUL OUTLOOK AMONG PEOPLE GENERALLY SINCE THE CEASE FIRE. IN PART, ALSO, IT IS A REFLECTION OF THE ATTITUDES OF WARY COOPERATION OF BUDDHIST AND GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP. THIS, THE CITY ADMINISTRATION IN DANANG PERMITTED USE OF THE PUBLIC INTER-NATIONAL PARK, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN RECENT YEARS, AS THE CENTER OF THE BUDDHIST CELEBRATION. NATIONAL POLICE IN BOTH DANANG AND HUE WERE COOPERATIVE IN ASSISTING THE SMOOTH FLOW OF PARADE ACTIVITIES. HOWEVER, THE GVN REPRESENTATION AT THE

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MAIN CEREMONY IN DANANG WAS AT A VERY LOW LEVEL.
BROWN
UNQUOTE
WHITEHOUSE

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NMAFVVZCZ

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